

# upcoach

## MAGAZINE

Issue 13 | October 2022

FEATURING

# Shaping the Future

THE PURPOSE-DRIVEN PURSUIT  
OF SAMMAT EDUCATION

Also in this edition ...

ACCELERATE GROWTH | ENGAGE CONVERSATIONS | REDESIGN SYSTEMS

FREE BUSINESS ADVICE IN EVERY ISSUE!

“ ... EVOLUTION is essential in business ...

Remember the name Kodak? You know the one. The most famous name in photography and videography back in the 1970s. Did you ever wonder what happened to such a strong brand and business? Here's what happened...

Founded in the year 1888 by George Eastman as 'The Eastman Kodak Company', Kodak became 'THE' name for photography, as they enabled the availability of cameras to every household by producing equipment that was portable and affordable. For years, Kodak dominated its industry and by 1968, it held about 80% of the global market share in the field of photography. But here's where it went pear-shaped...

digital camera actually worked for Kodak). Their ignorance towards new technology, not adapting to changing market dynamics, and holding onto an aging belief that film and printing sheets were better (which their business model was built on) initiated Kodak's downfall. Their direct competitor (Fujifilm) took advantage of the market shift and become the new name in photography. In January of 2012, Kodak filed for bankruptcy. The point of my story is that EVOLUTION is essential in business if you want to survive and thrive. That's why this edition is centered around Evolving

your Business. In this edition, Nick explains what you can do to prepare your business to face uncertainties in the future, Guy shares his 5 SMART strategies, Gary writes about redesigning systems for greater efficiency, and our Guest Author, Lana Wirth, shares her secrets to speeding up your cold calling results. And as always, we have another inspiring success story from another Upcoach client. Here we go!

“ ... prepare your business to face uncertainties in the future ...

Chris Herbert  
Editor of UPCOACH Magazine



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Teach a person how to fish and they'll be able to eat for a lifetime. This old saying stems from the ability to provide Education. With the idea that if you know more ...

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CONTACT

1300 459 302  
ask@upcoach.com.au  
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# Planning to Evolve

**Why it's so important to prepare your business to think SMART, work SMART and grow SMART over the next three years in an uncertain Australian economy.**

With Nick Psaila

**I**n 2008 we had what most in business today would call a “reset”. The GFC or Global Financial Crisis. Fast forward to 2020 and humanity was plunged into a global pandemic called Covid-19. Two years later and the virus may not be the only pandemic humanity is facing. I think the real pandemic is just about to unfold itself in ways many of us are not prepared for. Here's why ...

Now just to be clear, I am not a doomsday prepper in any way shape or form and I hate being the bearer of bad news, however, you only need to scratch a little past the surface to see what's coming in business today.

The GFC was based on a financial crisis. Over inflated property prices, banks lending to people that just couldn't afford it and then one day,

everything turns to sour grapes. Everyone on the planet realed from the situation. Some worse than others. Now add to that a global scenario where lockdowns of cities, fear fabricated by the media and countries like China are locking down millions, (still to this day) shortages on food, supplies of materials and list goes on ... something has to give.

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Ok, now that the doom and gloom is out the way, let's take a look at some facts we are seeing in Australia and what it means for businesses right now:

**1** Consumer confidence in spending is slowing - according to trading economics we are witnessing this trend. *The Westpac-Melbourne Institute Index of Consumer Sentiment for Australia dropped 3.0 percent month-over-month in July 2022, down for the eighth month in a row, amid surging prices and the prospect of more tightening by the country's central bank.*

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isn't as  
out of  
reach as  
you think.”

**2** Interest rate hikes - according to the Guardian reporting on the 5th July - *Homeowners warned to expect at least two further rate hikes as repayments soar. Cash rate predicted to rise again in August as the RBA attempts to bring down rising inflation*

**3** The cost of living is skyrocketing - according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics March 2022 report - *Over the past twelve months all LCIs rose by between 3.8% and 4.9% making it one of the most aggressive hikes in the last 20 years*

How does this affect your business? Think of it like dominoes. You hit one they all start to fall. Interest rates go up and consumer confidence goes down. Many people that have mortgages are already on a knife edge as they have borrowed exuberant amounts of money just to get into the marketplace. So any fluctuation in rate rises and they are paying hundreds extra a month.

I recently saw that a \$1million dollar loan will come with an extra \$1800 per month hike if the rates continue on their current trajectory. Now add to that that food and petrol price increases and the combination creates fear in moving ahead with anything that's out of the normal day to day life.

So if you are in a service based business such as trades or even in retail, the consumer may think twice about borrowing extra to do that renovation or buy that new car or go on that holiday. Can you see the bigger picture?

**So how do you get your business ready for what's coming?**

There are some key areas that you can look at and the answer isn't as out of reach as you may think. Lets look at mother nature for the answers. For example, in spring you get ready and plant for the harvest, in autumn you start preparing for winter by setting up reserves and running a little leaner. Business is no different if you follow that process. Lean out and prepare for the years ahead and then prepare for when the takeoff comes again.

The only confusion in following the above advice is that COVID threw a spanner in the works of the traditional approach of running a business. Post COVID we have seen the largest period of non-financial growth in Australia in the last 20 years. (By non-financial, what I mean is the economy looks like its booming, however the margins are less than what you would expect with such growth).

**In order to prepare for the future let me show you what areas you MUST consider now:**

**1 Finances:** The outcome for any business may seem simply about profits however the truth of the matter is that it's about “break even”. I get to see and talk with over 20 business owners a week that are looking for help and about 80% of the business owners don't accurately know their break even. This figure makes or breaks your business. It's what you need to make as a minimum to keep the doors open.

**For Example:** If you have a \$50,000 per month breakeven and you are operating at 50%, it means that you have to make at least \$100,000 per month to keep operating. Now on top of this you also have all the operating costs and cost of goods and so on. So the key here is to start to trim breakeven costs that you may not need. The big office lease, the extra cars, the luxuries and subscriptions. The leaner you can run the ship the better. I would like to challenge you over the next 6 months to see if you can trim between one to three percent of your expenses, to lower your breakeven and improve your profitability.

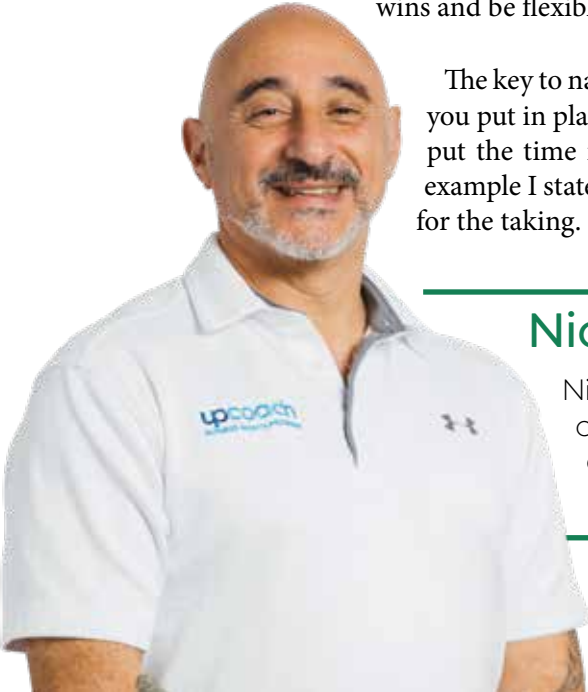
**2 Efficiency:** I can't tell you the amount of businesses I speak to that tell me they spend a big portion of their day putting out fires. Think of the time and effort it takes to fix mistakes or to have to go back and forth on site. Not to mention materials and other costs involved. If you simply use the formula we teach at Upcoach of a 1% improvement daily, you will start to see a significant decrease in costs and an increase in efficiency and profits.

**For Example:** If you do 20 jobs per month and improve each job by 1% efficiency, at a total income of \$200K, by the end of the month you will retain 20% more profits and time. That's a whopping \$40,000. All derived from a 1% improvement per job. Can you see how it compounds? You don't have to sack people or try to radically cut costs, you just need to be 1% better at everything you do daily!

**3 Focus:** Over the last two or so years the majority of the population has had so much to deal with that trying to focus in an uncertain world has literally become impossible. Unfortunately through the lack of focus we have seen a fragmented economy and businesses being in all sorts of challenging situations. The key to moving into the next three years is to start planning and have a singular focus on getting your business secured and ready for the days ahead. I find that if you set short and medium term goals under an overarching major long term goal, you allow yourself to not be distracted by the noise or having to concentrate on a 100 things at once.

**For Example:** Lets say your goal in three years is to reach \$5 million in sales and have a team of 10. Your sub goals (smaller and easily achievable - short and medium term) may be in employing an Operations Manager or someone that can help share the journey and the heavy lifting to get to the goal. Another sub goal may be to get three new contracts in order to reach that objective. Can you see that by setting goals you achieve clarity and focus becomes a lot easier? Plan your way into the next three years, use bite size chunks to have frequent wins and be flexible to pivot if needed.

The key to navigating through the next three years depends on what sort of planning and strategy you put in place today. Proactivity will always act as an advantage and those business owners that put the time in to plan now for the future will be the ones that thrive. Consider the seasonal example I stated earlier. Now is the time to plan ahead and start planting seeds. The future is yours for the taking.



Nick Psaila

Nick is the Founder of Upcoach Business Growth Programs. As a celebrated business speaker, coach, thought leader and author of Up-ology and Striking GOLD, Nick has helped thousands of business owners to achieve success.



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## Shaping the Future

The Purpose-driven Pursuit  
of Sammat Education

**T**each a person how to fish and they'll be able to eat for a lifetime. This old saying stems from the ability to provide Education. With the idea that if you know more, you can do more. At Sammat Education, this is the driving force behind their growth as they are truly shaping the futures of tomorrow, through their unique approach to learning and educational programs.



# “... a business fueled by passion and purpose.

Back in 2009, Matthew (Matt) Gillard was working as a burnt-out and uninspired Deputy Principal. For two years, Matt had been wrestling with an idea to provide educational technologies to schools and kids in classrooms. As the “daily grind” was no longer enjoyable, Matt, along with the support of his wife Sam, decided to set up Sammat Education and take the leap.

Initially, Matt made contact with some educational distributors to run professional learning for resellers using Interactive Whiteboards in schools. This quickly grew and Matt became an independent reseller and then developed some technology incursion programs that allowed face-to-face learning in the classroom teaching students. From here, things quickly grew, and within another year, it was time to onboard another teacher.

Witnessing growth is great, however, it's clear to see that Sammat Education is a business fueled by passion and purpose. Matt comments that the most enjoyable part of the job is watching students grow as they learn and develop new skills. When you get to observe a student have a “lightbulb moment” with the resources and challenge you have provided them, it is something out of this world to see them achieve success.

Operating from Kellyville, in North West Sydney, Sammat Education's WHY is to create interactive and engaging learning experiences today, for tomorrow's confident and creative individuals. In a nutshell, the outcome is to create lifelong learning skills in students who participate in the programs and to give teachers the tools they need to develop this in their classrooms.

## There are 3 main parts to the business:

- 1 Professional Learning programs for teachers that increase the capacity of teachers and schools to integrate technology authentically across the curriculum.
- 2 Provide student incursion workshops in schools and school holiday workshops that develop future-focused skills, including critical and design thinking to be active lifelong learners.
- 3 Provide high-quality and engaging educational technology resources for schools and families at home. (ideal as Christmas or birthday presents - head to <https://sammatt.education/> for more)

Now operating with five teachers and a Virtual Assistant as part of the team, the business has experienced significant growth, even throughout the Pandemic. When asked about the impact of Covid Matt comments: “apart from the growth over the last few years, the fact that we have survived TWO COVID lockdowns, with the second one lasting six months, shows that we are dedicated and committed to what we are doing.

Who would've thought after running the business for more than 10 years, the only thing that could bring us to our knees was schools having to lock out external providers due to a pandemic?”

Even with such a barrier to operating as a business, the work Matt and the team have put in to develop new products and integrate systems over this time has paid off. Matt mentions, what we put in place after the first lockdown really helped us in the second lockdown. So much so that we grew the business by 20% in those 12 months.

These numbers are not surprising. With annual sales of \$775,000 back in 2020, Sammat has just experienced their best year ever by achieving over \$1.2 million in sales across 2022.

When asked about what Matt is most proud of to date, he boasts cheerfully, “the thing I am most proud of is the team that we have put together to form the 'Sammatt Family'. Our main mission is to improve the outcomes for students and teachers in the classroom and for that to happen we need experienced and passionate educators. Our highly accomplished teachers carry an amazing level of expertise and have loads of experience in the classroom. They are the best at what they do and I absolutely love working with them and helping them to be successful.”

As a dedicated and loving family man, Matt mentions his greatest achievement is through his marriage and family. With three



wonderful kids, life is filled with rugby league, cricket, and time at the beach, so Matt is no stranger to being busy. Growing up in Sydney, sport was always on the agenda, so it was only natural that Matt pursued a PE teaching degree at University.

After a few years of teaching PE, Matt blended into teaching technology where his interest in education through technology really caught fire.

I decided to ask Matt a few more questions, to find out what he's learnt throughout his business journey and what's next:

## Matt, your business journey is pretty inspiring. What have you learnt personally while growing Sammat Education?

To be honest, before working with Upcoach I was just doing what I thought was right and winging it. I was at a crossroads because I had three teachers working with us and a business that was organically growing with no advertising budget. I knew I had to start educating myself on how to run a business properly in order for the growth to continue.

However, my mindset was still in teacher mode. I had to shift that mindset to become a business leader and operator.

Once I started working with Nick and the Upcoach team, a lot of this became clearer. I was a lot better in understanding my numbers and setting targets. Systems were created and established. I started to look at the business from above and could see things differently. We created new programs and opened doors to new opportunities.

## What do you find challenging in building an education business?

There's been a lot of challenges but right now, the thing I find most challenging is time management. I have so many tasks and new opportunities that I want to work on, but I can't forget the things that need to be done in order for us to remain successful and support what we are currently doing.

For the last few months, I have read and participated in some time management courses and now I am using an app called Motion

(usemotion.com) that allows me to plan tasks and projects. It is a wonderful resource that breaks up my tasks and projects and will automatically adjust your calendar using AI to fit these around appointments and meetings. It definitely helps me maintain focus during the day.

## What do you think makes a business successful?

You need to have a product or service that solves a problem or need for the client as a fundamental part of your business. All the fanciest systems and resources in the world will not let a business survive without a product or service that the client actually needs.

Then building a good team with the right people and good systems that can support the growth. Creating a great culture will support your team in the work that they do. Allowing the team to work in the business and the owner to step aside and work on the business will benefit and help the business grow and be successful.

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“  
... building a good team with the right people and good systems that can support the growth.

I would also suggest having an external mentor for the business owner. This enables you to develop yourself as a leader and move the business forward with a fresh set of eyes and ideas.

**This edition is dedicated to Evolving and Working Smarter in your business. Do you have any SMART business advice you can share?**

Yes. Build systems that can talk to each other and automate procedures. The systems we have set up over the past two years have probably saved about 50 hours per month in administration time alone.

**A few examples of what we have done include:**

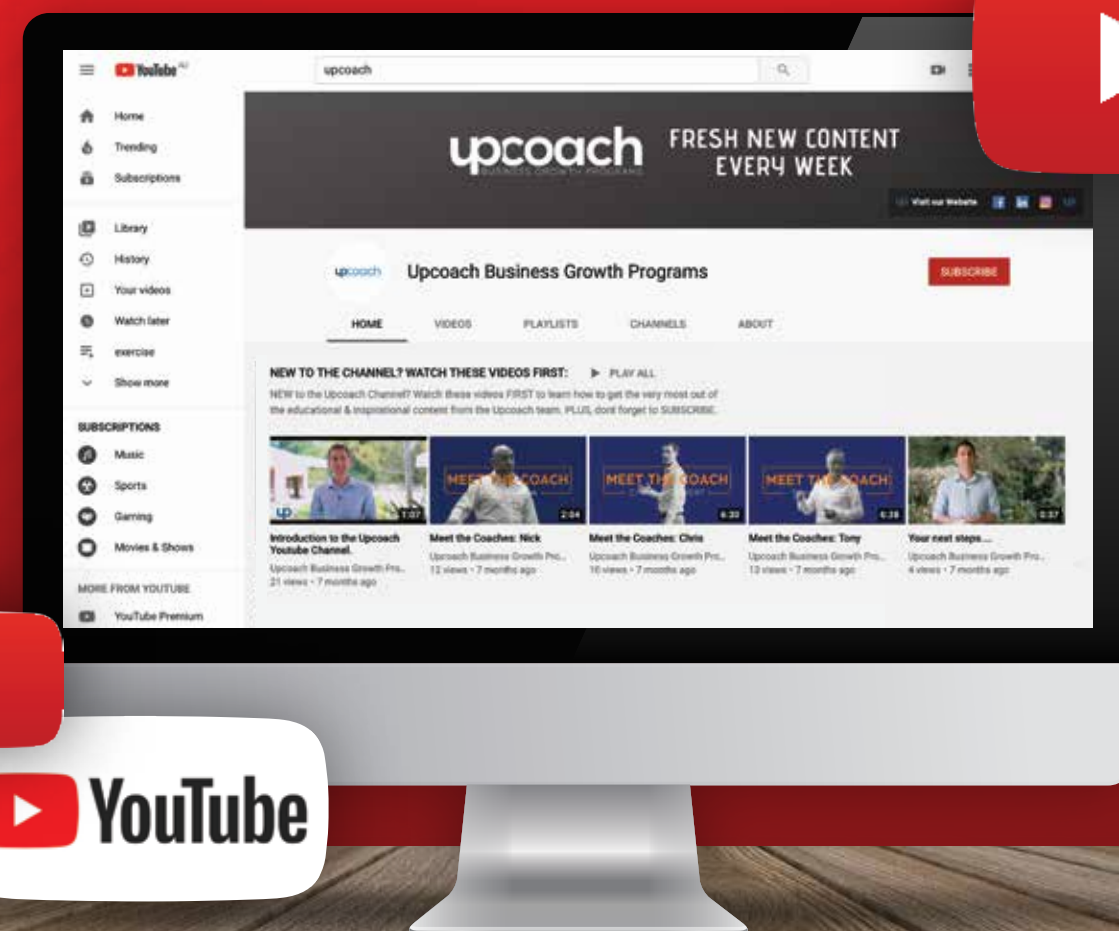
- ✓ Upgrading our website so it talks to our accounting system (Xero) in relation to quote requests, purchase orders, invoicing, and account reconciliations. Previously everything was done manually in excel spreadsheets.
- ✓ Leads from the website are automatically added to our EDM software (Mailerlite), SMS marketing (Burst SMS), and client CRM (Infinity).
- ✓ Drip feed campaigns (Mailerlite) are set up to nurture clients after they have signed up for a free guide or our teaching handbook (Optinmonster).
- ✓ Workshop bookings in our client CRM can automatically produce welcome letters (Google Docs), update calendars for our trainers (Google Calendar), and also create a Xero invoice for the booking.

**What's next for Sammat Education?**

- Expanding our Regional program into new areas.
- Investigating new trainers in Melbourne and NSW Hunter Regions.
- Developing a new online learning portal for self-paced programs for teachers.
- New white label product for schools and also parents looking to engage their child at home.
- Development of a Referral system and Platinum club that rewards our existing customer base.

Written by Chris Herbert

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# HOW TO Build More Engaging Conversations over the Phone

**Y**ou use it all the time, chatting to friends and family, you know it's not a scary device! So why is it so hard for you to pick up the phone and make "that" call when it comes to business? Your Business? The baby you have worked so hard to nurture and grow and establish a great reputation in the industry for.

To be honest, I HAVE NO IDEA why it's so hard! Building rapport is fun! Having a chat and getting to know someone that you are hoping to do business with is a great part of building your brand. Surrounding yourself with like-minded people, with similar values, in life, and in business is a really wonderful thing, it makes doing business and owning a business just that much easier and enjoyable.

Cold Calling is a slightly different scenario, as you never know what you are going to get when someone answers the phone to take your call... Will it be a snotty-nosed gatekeeper that won't give you any information and certainly won't put you through to the person you really

want to speak to? Possibly. Will you be hung up on and don't even get to say a word? Yes, maybe.

It can be challenging, but the numbers don't lie...

Research shows that 82% of all buyers were willing to accept a meeting when a representative reached out to them personally. 51% of all business owners said they would rather hear from a sales representative over the phone than by email, drop-in visits, or other media channels.

In a study by Zoominfo, nearly 75% of all prospects attended an event or a scheduled meeting based on a cold call or email.

On a corporate level, nearly 57% of all executives said they prefer sales representatives to call them over any other method of

communication or marketing.

I have picked up the phone and cold-called thousands of businesses and I can honestly say - I have NEVER been abused. Here's why:

Cold Calling Business to Business (B2B) should not be random - you are not just banging through a list. What you are actually doing is targeted calling, whereby the only thing 'cold' is the initial conversation. We (you) do not want to give the impression we are calling the prospect randomly because you are not... You know your ideal target market and you should make an effort to get to know about them to make sure they are the right fit for your services/product.

## FIRSTLY

**INVESTIGATE:** Have a look online and find out more about the business. Find out who the correct person to talk to may be. Look for a direct line or mobile number for your prospect (MASSIVE WIN!). Having a name makes it much easier when coming face-to-face with the dreaded gatekeeper... It gives an impression of a degree of conversational history (my old buddy, old pal ...) and they don't want to be rude to you or not give you what you ask for, as you obviously know someone of importance to the business, possibly her/his boss.

**RESEARCH:** Do some background research about the person you are connecting with. Find some common ground so you can have a valuable chat and turn a cold call into a comfortable and open conversation. No one wants to feel as though they have been randomly selected for a call. This will increase the chances of them listening to what you have to say and will help you build rapport.

**PREPARE:** Be prepared for the conversation. Having a script will give you confidence and is a lifeline when dealing with objections. The script will allow you to guide the conversation and obtain information that is crucial to you qualifying the lead.

**PLAN:** Have a plan for the call, be clear on what you want the result to be and how it will be actioned. Be ready for the next steps (i.e. sending calendar invites, emailing confirmations etc)

**STRATEGISE:** Know the best time to call. Here are some facts on the best days and times to plan your cold calling campaign.

- The best days for outbound calls are Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Nearly 40% more sales are made on Wednesdays as compared to Mondays.
- In addition, between the hours of 4 pm and 5 pm are the best times to call prospective customers. The second-best time is between 11:00 a.m. and Noon. If you want the absolute best chances for success, you should plan your day to make calls during these hours on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

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... it can be  
challenging ...





AND HERE'S MY ADVICE TO ACHIEVE BEST RESULTS:

**BE PREPARED TO FOLLOW UP AND MAKE MULTIPLE CALLS.** You may get the desired results on your first call or you may not. But don't give up. Always call back when requested and definitely try to call them numerous times. The only reason they won't answer is that they are busy - we all are. So don't give up after the first attempt.

**BUILD A DATABASE** - send a quarterly email newsletter with hints and tips - not asking for any business or sales, but providing upfront value to your prospective customer. "What - that company is giving something without asking for anything? Wow, I like that, I will remember this business"



Always remember, be **CONFIDENT**, you know you have a great brand, take the time to develop your conversations, and go get those loving, loyal, and long-term customers.

Happy Dialling!

Lana Wirth

Lana Wirth is the Operations Manager at Upcoach and runs Call My Leads, an Australian-based outbound call centre that connects business owners to their ideal clients. With 25 years of experience, Lana is dedicated to helping clients grow their businesses by building better conversations.

**If you struggle to connect with  
YOUR IDEAL CLIENT  
there is a better way**

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Accelerate  
Your Growth  
the SMART Way

By Guy Whitcher

**H**ave you ever questioned the way you do things? Have you ever considered that there might be a better way? After working with such a diverse range of business owners, what I have found is that every business owner has energy, passion, great skills and expertise. Almost universally they share strong growth aspirations, for their business, their family, and for themselves.

However, in this article, I want to share several client stories (using pseudonyms) that highlight five ways in which we (wait for it) get in the way of our own growth. I'll pose some questions and provide you with strategies to get SMART with your people, and yourself, and to accelerate your business's growth.

So, let's look at the first obstacle and the story of Ron, one that I have heard many times...

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They  
can't do  
it with  
the same  
quality as  
me.”

RON

“So, Ron, why are you doing these tasks and not giving them to Sandy?” I posed to Ron who owns a great equipment hire business in Queensland. His aspiration is to grow his already profitable business to fund other interests he has in green energy and emerging industries and to spend less time managing the equipment hire operations.



“Well, she can't do it with the same quality as me.” Here arrives **OBSTACLE #1** and it is more common than you might think. Ron's comment wasn't founded in arrogance in any way. It was as he saw it and he struggled to get around it. We had a great conversation around obstacle #1. We'll come back to that conversation and what Ron did to make a seismic shift later in the article, but this choice Ron was making, and it was a choice, was effectively one of the reasons he had not been able to release time to focus on his other business aspirations that he is really excited about.

JIM



Jim runs a successful residential construction company in Sydney. His work comes from referrals due to the exceptional quality and timeliness of his work. Jim has several capable guys in his team who he has worked with at previous companies. Jim is running two jobs concurrently now, not his ideal scenario, but a delay on a big job from one of his clients has meant juggling the two jobs, his guys and his own time.

We were recently working on how Jim spends his time and I set an exercise to track his activities daily over a couple of weeks. We discovered that the first half of three days each week were typically spent with the guys on one of the jobs. It was setting things up, talking with the guys, and then spending some time with them, doing some of the work generally until around 1pm.

Now, Jim's guys are by his own description, capable, and with who he has great trust. So why spend almost 15 hours of the week doing this, especially when one of the goals we set is to free up 2-3 nights in which he is working for 2-3 hours?

“Well Guy, I need to set up the jobs for the day and get what I need done.”

“And how long does it take to set up for the day Jim?” I add.

“Well anywhere between three-quarters of an hour to maybe an hour and a half” says Jim.

“So that takes you somewhere between 8 and 9am and you were there until when?”

Now, this brought a wry smile to my face and to Jim's. And then the 'confession'.

“Guy, I really enjoy working with the guys and getting on the tools”.

Bingo! There we have it. **OBSTACLE #2. I like being on the tools!**

Why is it an obstacle? It is an obstacle because the choice to do this has consequences. In Jim's case it meant:

- ☑ Continuing to work nights at the expense of time with family
- ☑ Not spending the 10-15 hours on quoting and being with the clients, and
- ☑ Not spending time on growing his business.

I am not saying that it isn't necessary sometimes, but it is a choice.

CHRIS

Obstacle #3 is one I wrote about in the last Upcoach magazine. Why does Chris who runs a very successful distribution business take all the problem calls from her team just about every day? It is taking a toll on her physical and mental health. “Well, I've done this for years Guy,” I was informed on asking the question. “But Chris, you have Jay your #2 who I know knows as much about the business as you do.” “Hmmm, (silence).....

When we do things for years, we form what is **OBSTACLE #3, Habits**. These habits may have served us well in the past, but don't serve us well for growth. For those that haven't read the July edition in which I drew from the great work of James Clear's, Atomic Habits, take a read. I'll briefly cover the 'four laws' to break old habits later in this article as another way of getting SMART.



MIKE

Now **OBSTACLE #4** ..... “They'll play up without me” says Mike, owner of a home renovation business. And “how can I be sure they'll get it right,” partly related to Obstacle #1.

Maybe they can be a bit like kids from time to time, but will this impact productivity? Will it affect quality? “Well maybe, maybe not, it all depends”. We'll address the 'what does it depend on in getting smart.

And lastly to Anthony and **OBSTACLE #5, But it is who I am...**

ANTHONY

What we do defines us. For Anthony, a great client who runs a successful and rapidly growing engineering company on the East coast, designing innovative solutions is what has defined him and what he also loves doing. So, whilst he runs the business, he is still somewhat defined by where he came from, and this is potentially limiting his potential and his growth.

What do you tell others and yourself about who you are? A builder, architect, engineer, or your trade/craft, or a successful business owner and builder?



So, in summary, here are the Top 5 Obstacles I have seen get in the way of growth:

- #1 “They can't do it with the same quality as me”
- #2 “I like being on the tools”
- #3 Old habits
- #4 “They'll play up without me”
- #5 “But it is who I am”

So, let's set about helping Ron, Jim, Chris, Mike and Anthony get SMART.

You recall Ron's equipment hire business and the issue of quality. Let me pose a question to you first. Did you do the work with the same quality when you were at the same stage as your people are now? Probably not I would

“  
But it is  
who I am.”

... cont. pg 20



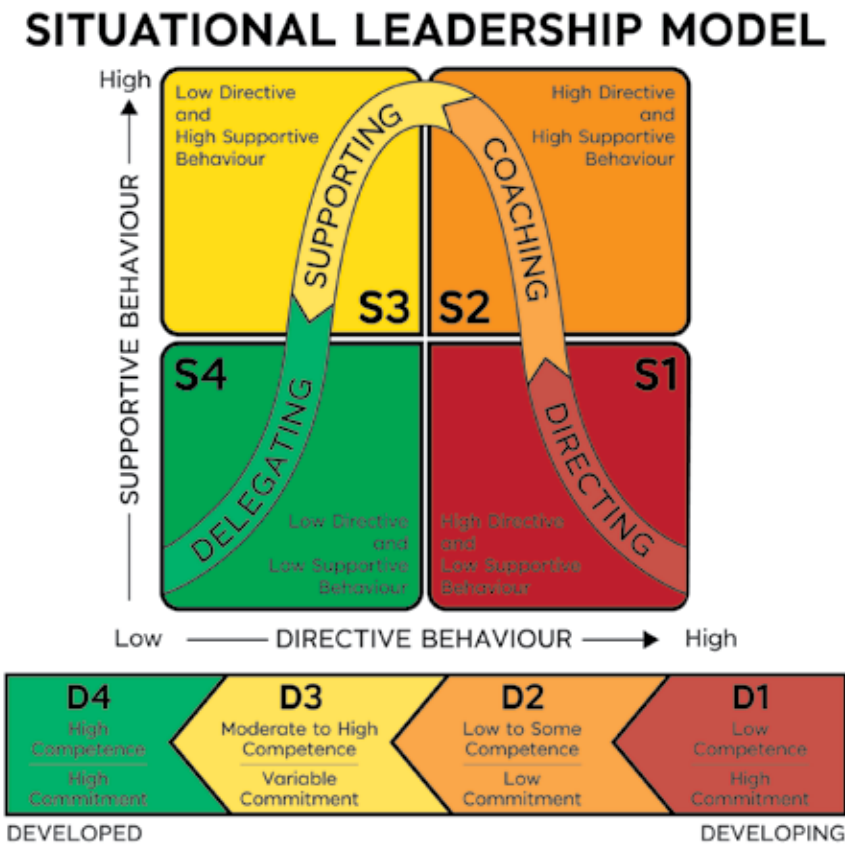
guess. You quite likely had a boss that was prepared to develop you so that you could produce great quality. He probably spent time explaining, giving you feedback and providing a safe environment in which to learn.

Ron and I had a conversation about this and Ron asked, “so how do I lead my guys?” “Well, it depends,” I replied. “And what does it depend on?”, he asked. Well, it depends on the person’s competence and commitment to the task. And this is where **SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP** is so powerful.

If you have someone who has low competence or commitment for the task (D1 or developmental level 1), you need to use Style 1 (S1) and **direct** them. This is what they need at that point. As they develop competence and commitment, you should use Style 2 (S2) and **coach** them. As they become more competent, use Style 3 (S3) and **support** them with a conversation and maybe a check-in after the task is done, and finally, as you develop them to be highly competent for the task and able to deliver the quality required, you use Style 4 (S4) and **delegate** the task of them. They don’t need you to be directing or watching, just give them an acknowledgment when the task is done.

Keep in mind that just about all jobs comprise a variety of tasks, so the style of leadership you choose, Directing, Coaching, Supporting or Delegating, will be related to the task, not to the whole job. For example, an apprentice plumber may be highly proficient in changing a tap set but hasn’t yet learned how to capably replumb a kitchen. Each will require a different style (S1 – S4) of leading.

In summary, they probably won’t do it with the same quality as you at the start, but as a leader, your job is to understand their



competence and commitment, and choose the right style of leading for any particular task.

So to get SMART, start a conversation with your team and ask them where they need more direction, coaching, or support to improve in their positions. Then work on teaching them how to do things just as well as you.

This will take time. However, as you develop them, you will get time back, and you will have someone who will feel empowered, more capable, and more satisfied. Plus you have effectively trained them how to do it your way.

**Worth trying Situational Leadership?! Is this worth having more conversations with your people?**

I still love Jim’s reflection on why he spent three half days on the tools – ‘Well I like being on the tools, Guy’. It’s great to recognise this, but more important for Jim it was recognising that he was making trade-offs.

So, the second SMART strategy is **BE AWARE AND OWN YOUR TIME**.

The tracking activity that Jim did enabled him to gain awareness of where he was spending his time and the underlying motivation. Now be aware, that Jim makes deliberate choices with his time. He still likes being on the tools, but he now schedules time for this when he has it, explains why to the team, and never prioritises this ahead of growing his business and spending time with his family. (Would I like him to come off the tools entirely? Yes, I would, but small steps!)

**Have you ever considered capturing and reflecting on how you spend your time? It’s up to you to own your own time.**

“

## ... work towards a mindset shift ...

Now, there were some old habits at play with Jim as well as with our distribution business owner Chris who took the problem calls every day. And this leads to our third SMART strategy, to **BREAK (BAD) HABITS**. What are the laws for breaking bad habits?

- LAW #1:** **Make it Invisible** – remove any ‘cues’ from your environment (lock up your tools)!
- LAW #2:** **Make it Unattractive** – Reframe your mindset. Highlight the benefits (such as having more time) of avoiding your bad habits
- LAW #3:** **Make it Difficult** – Increase friction, increase the number of things you must do to be able to repeat your bad habit (Put two locks on your tools and hand the key to someone else)!
- LAW #4:** **Make it Unsatisfying** – get your coach or business associate to be your accountability partner. Make a habit contract and make the costs of your bad habits public and painful!

**Now to address Mikes ‘they’ll play up if I’m not there’ obstacle...**

My SMART strategy for this is to **SET EXPECTATIONS** for the tasks and timeframes for your employees. More often than not, employees don’t have any parameters around their daily tasks. Use SMART – Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound expectations. Consider also whether you are leading each person in the most appropriate way (See Situational Leadership above). And finally, are you inspecting what you are expecting?

Try it. And if they are playing up, hold them accountable for the expectations that you set with them. If they haven’t reasonably met these, it’s question and feedback time. Maybe they need more skill on some of the tasks? Maybe the weather beat them, or maybe they need to know that not meeting reasonable expectations is not where your values are and means they need to lift their performance.

**How are you setting your expectations with your team?**

The last way of getting SMART is with yourself. Yes, Anthony trained and has considerable experience as an engineer, but he is first and foremost a business owner now (even if he also likes to get on his tools) This is who he is. It doesn’t matter what trade, skill or profession you have, the same applies when you take on a team, run a business or lead an organisation.

My strategy here is to **WORK TOWARDS A MINDSET SHIFT**. To do this you can describe what you aspire to become in the current tense. For example, ‘I run a small business specialising in developing commercial space for industry in Victoria’. You may have been trained and worked as a carpenter, brickie, plumber or electrician, but now (at a minimum aspirationally) you are something else, a business owner delivering great things to clients or customers. Your transition in thinking will go from that of a technician to that of a manager/business owner.

This is who you are. Wear it as a badge of pride.

### Guy Whitcher

Guy is one of the Business Growth Experts at Upcoach and is extremely passionate about the clients and the businesses he works with, being a sounding board for them, and steering the course to success.







# If it Ain't Broke ..., Break It!

## Redesigning Systems for Greater Efficiency

By Gary Bigelow

**I**n 1991 Louis Patler and Robert J Kriegel published a book of this name. It was focused on their view of the underlying problems with entrepreneurship in the USA at that time which was the suffering and demise of small business as big business grew increasingly dominant. The fundamental philosophy of this basic statement is still highly relevant for small and medium-sized businesses in Australia today.

For a very long-time, businesses relied on engineering the perfect product and then churning them out on volume using repetitive manufacturing processes. The cost to change those processes was very large, so from year to year, we barely saw any change in the design. The Holden Ute is a great example. This view changed however in the 1990s, as marketers took control away from engineers realising most goods were purchased by consumers. If you made this year's model look like last year's, there was no repeat purchase.

The iPhone is a classic example. Every September they release a new model and people queue for hours to be the first to buy. Apple are smart, they even make it impossible to run the latest version of IOS on older phones.

Consequently, Apple is now the highest valued company in the world.

There was nothing wrong with my iPhone 3, 5, or 7 but they created momentum in my purchasing cycle by taking the old model, breaking it, and then fixing it with new features that were sexier than the last. Recently, I attended a birthday party in a traditional Federation home in inner West Sydney. Their original rotary dial phone was still on the wall and still worked. A simple ugly black device with a rotary dialer had to transform for Apple to become successful. Someone there had the foresight to apply the "If it ain't broke ... break it" principle to generate one of the most amazing business growth stories in the world.

The reality of today's business environment is that if we don't reinvent ourselves regularly, someone else will and they may steal our customers and/or employees by creating a more applicable product or service, offer better work/life balance, or some other emotional reason for change. Then you are left trying to play catch up while they are already on their way to creating the next change in the market. And this doesn't just apply to the products and services we sell. It applies to the way we interact with our customers and employees. It also applies to us. The way we live, eat, exercise, and interact with our families. Change is everywhere. We need to reflect regularly on our businesses and take things apart to see if they are working the way the world wants them to, then, put them back together in a more appropriate form ... to fix it!

COVID-19 ripped through society. Along with illness and death, did you know it created the highest rate of domestic violence and divorce

we have seen in our history? It also created the highest rate of suicide and mental health issues ever seen. To address this, society has had to question the norm. It too has had to break it and fix it. The most obvious change has been the way we work now. Politicians and employers are appealing for workers to go back to the office. Some have even suggested legislation to get them back. The problem is, that to create a workable home office process to maintain productivity during COVID-19, businesses re-imagined work and in most cases have produced a more productive environment for workers at home. Workers don't enjoy spending two to three hours a day commuting and enjoy being there when the kids come home from school. Many businesses have permanently reduced their floor space and only ask employees to come into the office on limited occasions.

At the time COVID hit I was operating a business that involved visiting consumers in their homes to close sales and then sending tutors to the same homes to deliver lessons. Lockdowns and restrictions brought an end to that almost instantly. To survive this, my business had to transform overnight. We took every process apart and rebuilt a business



**Gary Bigelow**

Gary is one of the Business Growth Experts at Upcoach. With experience in business operations, finance, and management, Gary's no-nonsense and focused approach helps all of his clients achieve success.

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regularly, someone else will ...

that conducts the entire sales process, recruitment process and service delivery - online. We grew through lockdowns and increased our profit margins. The interesting finding here was that while we were forced to “break it”, the underlying changes we made were always there. We just weren't looking for them. A great lesson was learned. From that point onward, we regularly took each process apart and reviewed it for improvement, even though it appeared to be working just fine. With each re-engineering, the business became more efficient.

It is so easy to become complacent. Everything is running just fine! Then something unexpected happens. Your competitors offer a new approach, a cheaper service, and start eroding your revenue by taking clients away. They offer workers a better work/life balance and your key people leave. Next, your profits turn into losses and you can't understand what happened.

A great example of this was D.E.C. As one of the leading computer manufacturers of the 20th Century Digital Equipment Corporation, (D.E.C) technology was ahead of its time. They were run by engineers. They refused to contemplate change. In 1998 D.E.C was acquired by Compaq, a PC manufacturer, and was no more.

“If it ain't broke ... break it”, isn't a neat catchphrase. It is a philosophy of business renewal. It is how we evolve in this ever-changing business environment. If you are not evolving, you are going backward. Probably faster than you imagine. To stay on top, you have to have a process of continuous improvement in place.

An easy way to practice this in your business is by asking yourself a simple question:

**How do I double my output or efficiency with half the amount of resources?**

This might seem absurd, but by proposing such a significant question, you will be amazed at what sort of solutions you may find. When you start thinking “outside the box” to break your current processes and redesign them for greater efficiency, you will be surprised with the improvement even if it's only by a small margin at first. Large companies do this as a matter of course. For smaller companies, hiring an external advisor who can ask the hard questions makes the process even easier.

You spend so much of your day “in” your business that it is difficult to critically analyse things that are working and look for ways to improve. So take a step back, ask yourself the question above and be prepared to break it!



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